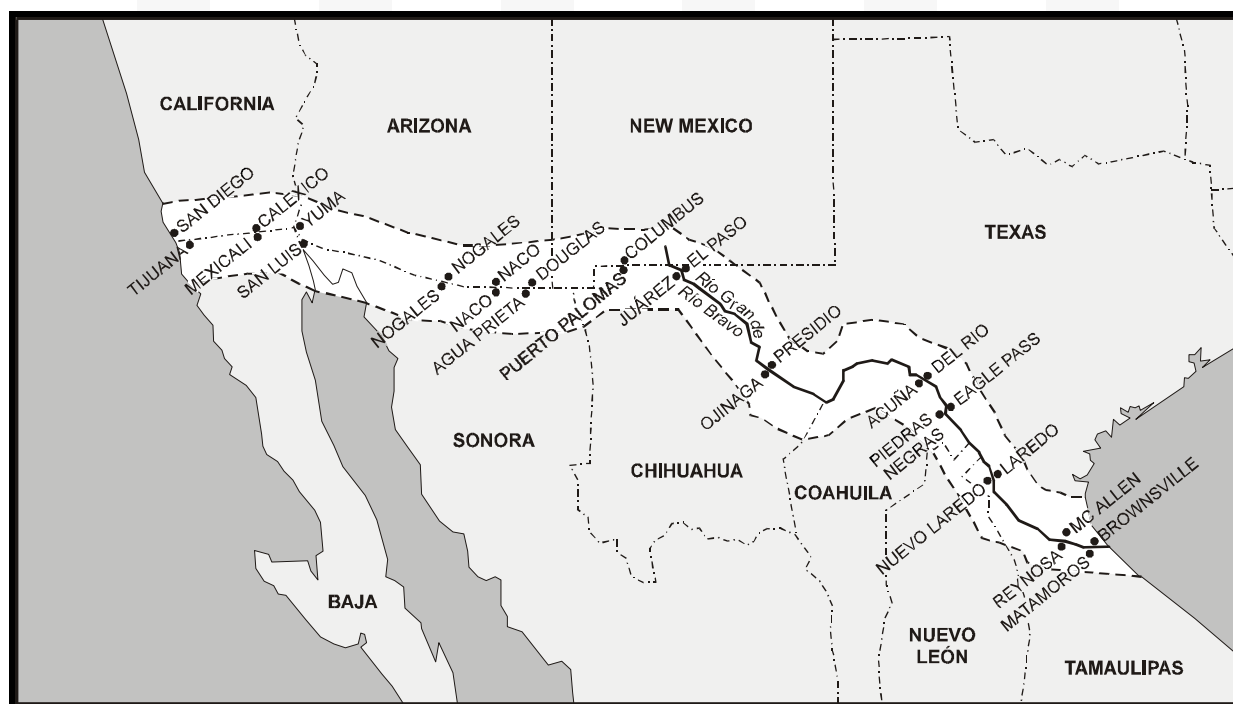




Semiannual Report on United States-Mexico Border Contingency Planning Activities



SEMIANNUAL REPORT ON UNITED STATES-MEXICO BORDER CONTINGENCY PLANNING ACTIVITIES



EPA 550-R98-006
August 1998
Issue Number 2

INTRODUCTION

EPA's Chemical Emergency Preparedness and Prevention Office (CEPPO) provides leadership, advocacy, and assistance to:

- ➡ Prevent and prepare for chemical emergencies;
- ➡ Respond to environmental crises; and
- ➡ Inform the public about chemical hazards in their community.

To protect human health and the environment, CEPPO develops, implements, and coordinates regulatory and non-regulatory programs. The Office carries out this work in partnership with regions, domestic, and international organizations in the public and private sectors, and the general public.

The purpose of the *Semiannual Report on United States-Mexico Border Contingency Planning Activities* is to consolidate information on United States-Mexico border joint response contingency planning from EPA Regions, border states, and sister cities in order to promote the exchange of information and coordination among these groups. The types of activities presented in this report range from joint response planning meetings and meetings to develop sister city plans to actual joint response exercises and training courses.

Each of the EPA Regions and U.S. states along the United States-Mexico border were contacted for information on recent and future border contingency activities. The information gathered for the previous issue of the report serves as the baseline for this update. Future updates will be published twice a year.

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- ➔ Michael Heimowitz, Chemical Manufacturers Association

DOCUMENTS OF INTEREST

- ➔ Joint United States-Mexico Inland Contingency Plan (1988; currently under revision) (*available from EPA Headquarters*)
- ➔ Brownsville-Matamoros Sister City Emergency Response Plan (May 1997) (*available from EPA Region 6*)
- ➔ Eagle Pass-Piedras Negras Sister City Emergency Response Plan (March 1998) (*available from EPA Region 6*)
- ➔ Semiannual Report on United States-Mexico Border Contingency Planning Activities (Issue Number 1, February 1998) (*available from EPA Headquarters*)
- ➔ United States-Mexico Border Environmental Indicators 1997 (June 1998) (*available from EPA Region 9 or <http://www.epa.gov/usmexicoborder>*)

INTERNET SITES OF INTEREST

- ➔ EPA CEPPPO — <http://www.epa.gov/swercepp/>
- ➔ EPA Region 6 Border Program — <http://www.epa.gov/earth1r6/6bo/6bo.htm>
- ➔ Border Information and Solutions Network (BISN) — <http://www.triplesoft.com/bisn/>
- ➔ Border Environment Cooperation Commission — <http://cocef.interjuarez.com/>
- ➔ Texas Natural Resources Conservation Commission — <http://www.tnrcc.state.tx.us/>
- ➔ U.S.-Mexico Border Regional Environmental Information System — <http://begss1.beg.utexas.edu:8888/>
- ➔ City of Brownsville, Texas — <http://www.ci.brownsville.tx.us/>

SISTER CITIES

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| ➡ Brownsville, Texas-Matamoros, Tamaulipas | ➡ Columbus, New Mexico-Puerto Palomas, Chihuahua |
| ➡ McAllen, Texas-Reynosa, Tamaulipas | ➡ Douglas, Arizona-Agua Prieta, Sonora |
| ➡ Laredo, Texas-Nuevo Laredo, Tamaulipas | ➡ Naco, Arizona-Naco, Sonora |
| ➡ Eagle Pass, Texas-Piedras Negras, Coahuila | ➡ Nogales, Arizona-Nogales, Sonora |
| ➡ Del Rio, Texas-Ciudad Acuña, Coahuila | ➡ Yuma, Arizona-San Luis Río Colorado, Sonora |
| ➡ Presidio, Texas-Ojinaga, Chihuahua | ➡ Calexico, California-Mexicali, Baja California |
| ➡ El Paso, Texas-Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua | ➡ San Diego, California-Tijuana, Ensenada, Tecate, and Playas de Rosarito, Baja California |
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Official signing of the Eagle Pass-Piedras Negras Sister City Plan. Left to right: Fendol Chiles (EPA Region 6), Rogelio Flores (Municipal President of Piedras Negras), Claudio Bres (Mayor of Eagle Pass), and Guadalupe Cardona (Fire Chief of Eagle Pass). Photo courtesy of Fendol Chiles.

STATUS OF SISTER CITY PLANS

Brownsville, Texas-Matamoros, Tamaulipas	Signed on May 6, 1997. Title: <i>Cross Border Contingency Plan — U.S./Mexico — Brownsville/Matamoros.</i>
Eagle Pass, Texas-Piedras Negras, Coahuila	Signed on March 25, 1998. Title: <i>Cross Border Contingency Plan — U.S./Mexico — Eagle Pass/Piedras Negras</i>
Laredo, Texas-Nuevo Laredo, Tamaulipas; Del Rio, Texas-Ciudad Acuña, Coahuila; El Paso, Texas-Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua	Work underway on several of these plans.
Columbus, New Mexico-Puerto Palomas, Chihuahua	No sister city plan expected unless the population increases.
Douglas, Arizona-Agua Prieta, Sonora	Have an agreement concerning emergency response, but it is not legally binding and has not facilitated emergency response equipment crossing the border.
Naco, Arizona-Naco, Sonora	Cochise County Government currently has no plans to enter into an agreement with Naco, Sonora. (Naco, Arizona, is an unincorporated townsite of Cochise County.)
Yuma, Arizona-San Luis Río Colorado, Sonora	February 1995 draft (not signed). Title: <i>U.S.-Mexico Sister Cities—Yuma, Arizona-San Luis Río Colorado, Sonora—Hazardous Materials Incident Contingency Plan.</i>
Calexico, California-Mexicali, Baja California	Have developed two mutual aid agreements. The first in September 1993, entitled <i>City of Calexico-City of Mexicali Mutual Aid Agreement</i> . The second in February 1996, entitled <i>United States/Mexico—Imperial County/Ayuntamiento de Mexicali, B.C.—Emergency Services Mutual Aid Agreement</i> .
San Diego, California-Tijuana, Ensenada, Tecate, and Playas de Rosarito, Baja California	The Sister Cities have developed a communication plan for San Diego and Imperial Counties in the United States and Baja California in Mexico.

RECENT UNITED STATES-MEXICO BORDER CONTINGENCY PLANNING ACTIVITIES

Presented in Chronological Order (Presented by State in the Next Table)

➡ January 11, 1998	San Luis, Sonora Joint training exercise involving the Fire Departments of Yuma, Arizona, and San Luis, Sonora. Unknown scenario.
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➡ March 1998	San Diego, California San Diego County received an EPA grant to train Mexican staff along the border. So far, the grant has been used to provide classes for Mexican first responders in five municipalities in Baja California. Classes have included: First Responder Awareness Class (8 hours), First Responder Operational Class (24 hours), Incident Commander Class (40 hours), and Chemical Emergency Management for Executives Class (8 hours).
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➡ March 17-19, 1998	San Diego, California Border XXI United States-Mexico National Coordinators meeting. Participants of the binational workgroups discussed issues related to natural resources protection, pollution prevention, environmental health, environmental information resources, cooperative enforcement, contingency planning and emergency response, and solid and hazardous waste management. Participants included representatives from EPA Regions 6 and 9, Mexico's Secretariat of Environment, Natural Resources, and Fisheries (SEMARNAP), U.S. Department of State, U.S. Geological Survey, and the Tohono O'odham Tribe.
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➡ March 20, 1998	San Diego, California "Sister City Initiative Meeting on Joint Chemical Emergency Planning" organized by the International City/County Management Association and funded by EPA. Issues discussed included coordination of people, services and resources; binational data collection; cross border communication; formalizing mutual aid/liability; and response coordination for Tijuana, Tecate, San Diego, Mexicali, and Calexico. Twenty people attended, representing all levels of government from both sides of the border.
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➡ March 25, 1998	Eagle Pass, Texas-Piedras Negras, Coahuila The Mayor of Eagle Pass and the Municipal President of Piedras Negras signed the <i>Cross Border Contingency Plan—U.S./Mexico—Eagle Pass/Piedras Negras</i> . The signing took place in the middle of the international bridge, and the ceremony was attended by both U.S. and Mexican border authorities and government officials.

RECENT UNITED STATES-MEXICO BORDER CONTINGENCY PLANNING ACTIVITIES (cont'd)

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| ➡ March 26-27, 1998 | San Diego, California EPA Region 9 Regional Response Team meeting on marine issues. Organized by the U.S. Coast Guard. Speakers included personnel from U.S. Coast Guard Marine Safety Office, National Response Team, EPA, State of California, Department of the Interior, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Minerals Management Service, Scripps Institute, Department of Health and Human Services, Department of Energy, and Clean Bay Inc. |
| ➡ March 29, 1998 | Nogales, Arizona Binational exercise involving 26 agencies from both countries. Participants included officials from Santa Cruz County, Pima County, City of Nogales, State of Arizona, and Mexico. The scenario was a truck accident that resulted in a hazardous materials spill and fire at 4:00 a.m. along I-19 at Mariposa. |
| ➡ April 4, 1998 | San Luis, Sonora Level "B" hazardous materials drill involving the Fire Departments of Yuma, Arizona and San Luis, Sonora. Unknown scenario. |
| ➡ May 5-6, 1998 | Alamogordo, New Mexico FEMA Region 6 training session using CHER-CAT (Chemical Emergency Response and Capabilities Exercise). Participants included Alamogordo's local emergency response coordinator, firefighters, law enforcement officials, and other state emergency personnel. |
| ➡ May 27-28, 1998 | Río Rico, Arizona EPA Region 9 Regional Response Team meeting regarding land issues. Speakers included representatives from Cochise County, Pima County, Santa Cruz County, Tohono O'odham Tribe, Gila River Indian Community, Inter Tribal Council of Arizona, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Public Health Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, FEMA, Department of Justice, Department of the Interior, and the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR). |
| ➡ May 31, 1998 | San Luis, Sonora Hazardous materials class and drill for chlorine. The Fire Departments of Yuma, Arizona and San Luis, Sonora participated. Unknown scenario. |
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RECENT UNITED STATES-MEXICO BORDER CONTINGENCY PLANNING ACTIVITIES (cont'd)

➡ June 1998	Brownsville, McAllen, Laredo, Del Rio, and El Paso, Texas EPA Region 6 conducted five Clean Air Act (CAA) §112 workshops focused on Risk Management Plans. Participants were informed of the requirements under CAA §112(r)(1) to design and maintain a safe plant, identify hazards, and minimize consequences of releases.
➡ June 23-24, 1998	Las Cruces, New Mexico Emergency managers from the New Mexico cities of Las Cruces and Santa Teresa met with federal agencies (including the Immigration and Naturalization Service and Customs) to discuss border issues such as general emergency management for Las Cruces and transportation of hazardous materials through Santa Teresa as the port of entry.
➡ July 1998	Washington, D.C. EPA Headquarters finished a preliminary collection of existing U.S./Mexico border agreements, laws, regulations, policies, and procedures related to chemical accident prevention, preparedness, and response. Headquarters is now developing a strategy to make these documents easily available.
➡ July 12, 1998	San Luis, Sonora Training exercise. The Fire Departments of Yuma, Arizona and San Luis, Sonora participated. Unknown scenario.
➡ August 12-13, 1998	Sierra Vista, Arizona "Sister City Initiative Meeting on Joint Chemical Emergency Planning" organized by the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) and funded by EPA. Issues discussed included the sister city joint contingency plans, information availability and sharing, communication and general response coordination, technical support, training and joint exercises, and next steps to develop a joint emergency contingency plan.

RECENT UNITED STATES-MEXICO BORDER CONTINGENCY PLANNING ACTIVITIES

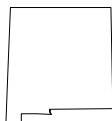
Presented by State (Presented in Chronological Order in Previous Table)

➡ **Texas**



- Signing of the Eagle Pass-Piedras Negras sister city emergency response plan (Eagle Pass; March 25, 1998)
- EPA Region 6 conducted five Clean Air Act §112 workshops on Risk Management Plans (Brownsville, McAllen, Laredo, Del Rio, and El Paso; June 1998).

➡ **New Mexico**



- FEMA Region 6 provided training exercise using CHER-CAT (Alamogordo; May 5-6, 1998)
- Emergency managers from the cities of Las Cruces and Santa Teresa met with federal agencies to discuss border issues (Las Cruces; June 23-24, 1998)

➡ **Arizona**



- Joint training exercise (Yuma; January 11, 1998)
- Binational exercise involving 26 agencies (Nogales; March 29, 1998)
- Hazardous materials drill (Yuma; April 4, 1998)
- EPA Region 9 Regional Response Team meeting regarding land issues (Rio Rico; May 27-28, 1998)
- Hazardous materials class and drill for chlorine (Yuma; May 31, 1998)
- Joint training exercise (Yuma; July 12, 1998)
- Sister City Initiative Meeting on Joint Chemical Emergency Planning hosted by the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) (Sierra Vista; August 12-13, 1998)

➡ **California**



- San Diego County received EPA grant to train Mexican staff along the border (San Diego; March 1998)
- Border XXI United States-Mexico National Coordinators meeting (San Diego; March 17-19, 1998)
- Sister City Initiative Meeting on Joint Chemical Emergency Planning hosted by ICMA (San Diego; March 20, 1998)
- EPA Region 9 Regional Response Team meeting regarding marine issues (San Diego; March 26-27, 1998)

➡ **Other Locations**

- EPA Headquarters finished a preliminary collection of emergency response laws, treaties, and agreements (Washington, D.C.; July 1998)
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FUTURE UNITED STATES-MEXICO BORDER CONTINGENCY PLANNING ACTIVITIES

(All Activities are Tentative)

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| → September 1998 | San Diego County, California The LEPC from California's Region 6 (which includes San Diego, Imperial, River Side, San Bernardino, Inyo, and Mono counties) will apply for a grant from EPA Region 9 to gather information on hazardous materials stored along the border. Mexican officials are expected to assist with the information gathering. |
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| → September 23-24, 1998 | San Antonio, Texas United States-Mexico Joint Response Team meeting. Participants will include EPA Headquarters, EPA Regions 6 and 9, State and local authorities, and representatives from Mexico's SEMARNAP, PROFEPA, and CENACOM. Issues to be discussed will include contingency planning at the federal, state, and local levels; transportation, customs, and industry involvement issues; exercising the Joint Contingency Plan with U.S. Coast Guard/National Response Center; environmental indicators; information management; and outreach strategies. Also, a workshop on the Spanish version of CAMEO will be held. |
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| → November 1998 | Brownsville, Texas-Matamoros, Tamaulipas Sister City Plan exercise. The exercise will include notification and response and will help determine how the current system works. Participants will include the emergency response teams from these two cities, EPA Region 6, and SEMARNAP. |
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